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The Forest Service Meets the Public Decision-Making and Public Involvement on the Coconino National Forest

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The purpose of this study was to evaluate selected cases where public involvement activities were elicited and to identify those aspects which appear to be related to the type of public response received. The case studies and analysis should be helpful to Forest Service personnel engaged in public involvement and to researchers in that field.

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Preface

The public involvement experiences of the Coconino National Forest range from issues in which the National Forest was taken almost completely by surprise to those which allowed time for serious, even elaborate, planning of public involvement. In spite of mistakes in the public involvement tactics used on the Coconino National Forest, the Forest Service personnel take the public involvement aspects of their job seriously. The results of their general dedication to the ideals of involving the citizenry have sometimes been gratifying.

My research would have been impossible without the critical suggestions of numerous individuals and administrative assistance of several others. I wish to thank particularly Gordon D. Lewis, Stanley Randall, C. R. Williams, Charles O. Minor, D. Ross Carder, William L. Holmes, Mark Story, Tom Reid, Don W. Freeman, Jerry D. Greer, William B. Finlay, and Charles Scheier. Officers of the Coconino National Forest were particularly helpful in providing complete access to the files of correspondence and memoranda in the Coconino Supervisor's Office, without which this research would have been impossible. Of course, I alone am responsible for any failures in fact or interpretations.

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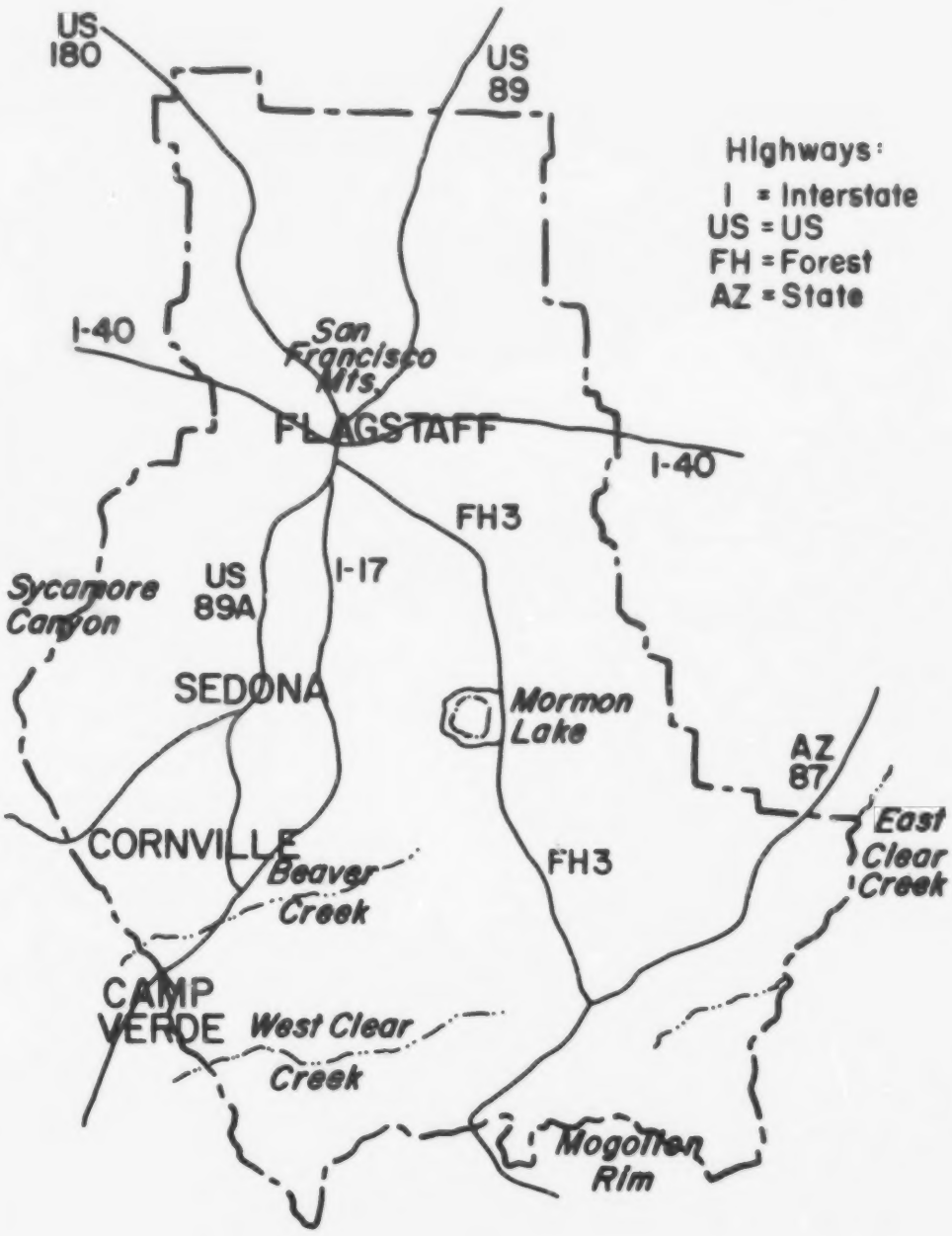
THE COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST



The Forest Service Meets The Public: Decision-Making And Public Involvement On the Coconino National Forest

John M. Ostheimer

I. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT CASES

Introduction

Public involvement on the Coconino National Forest runs the gamut from general planning to specific program activities. It ranges from requested public inputs to voluntary inputs from aroused citizens who resent not being consulted and demand to be heard. Selected public involvement experiences on the Coconino National Forest from which lessons can be learned are described and explained in the following case studies.

Land Use Plans

Development of long-range plans and policies, important though they undoubtedly are, usually receives very little public attention. The public usually does not react to planning because there are no specific short-run outcomes to focus upon; the long-run aspects bore people. The following three examples of land use planning on the Coconino National Forest indicate this, but provide some insight into the results of not having public input at early stages.

Multiple Use Guide

In 1973, a draft Multiple Use Guide was developed for the entire Coconino. A list of key people including "active, alert people who represent large groups or interests, or individuals who have shown a past interest in Forest Service programs and have the capacity to evaluate and comment intelligently," was compiled. The people included consisted of (Holmes, 1974):

> " . . . (Coconino National) Forest commodity users from a variety of interests or only occasional recreationists. Staff and Rangers were discouraged from suggesting for appointment those who had been the traditional contacts I & E or other advisory committee purposes. Some attempt was made to prevent loading the committee with those from preservationist organizations or people who express a high interest in environmental matters. However, it is recognized that such people, in fact, do understand much about the business of conservation and are willing to speak out on the matter. An attempt was made to include average citizens with little civic prestige and no known association with National Forest activities or specific interest in environmental issues."

Additional names were added to fill in obvious gaps in membership categories. Representatives of racial minorities, lower income groups, and blue-collar occupations were added. The final Select Committee consisted of 84 people.

Meetings were held to explain the draft Guide and solicit comments. It was emphasized that all comments presented would be given full consideration, and informal inputs were encouraged. This process overcame the inertia that usually occurs when formal written comments are requested, and many comments were received.

Fifty-eight percent of the Select Committee responded, compared with only 17 percent of the standing Multiple Use Advisory Committee. Moreover, 3 letters were received from individuals who had heard of and borrowed copies of the draft from the Forest Service or local public libraries.

Public involvement in this case had to be solicited and encouraged, but the results were rewarding. Adverse criticism was minimal, in part because of the non-controversial nature of the material, and in part because public involvement was obtained in the early stages. More importantly, however, the Coconino National Forest obtained, in addition to an acceptable multiple use guide, a picture of public concerns that they had not had before. On this question, Deputy Supervisor Holmes later commented (Holmes, 1974:3):

> We found that many people who had not previously been involved in Forest Service affairs seemed most flattered to be asked to serve in the capacity. We believe input from the average citizen who has had little association with the Forest Service was very valuable. This is probably the only process affording opportunity for these people to be heard by the Forest Service. We found out that the average citizen feels the Forest Service is doing a good job and this in itself was gratifying.

San Francisco Peaks Land Use Plan

Recreational and other uses of the slopes at the San Francisco Peaks, north of Flagstaff, Arizona, increased greatly during the 1960's. As the town of Flagstaff grew and outdoor recreation increased in popularity, more and more people began to use the Peaks. Hiking, skiing and snow-mobiling grew rapidly, attracted by the snow and the aspen and evergreen forests. This trend was emphasized when the Arizona Snow Bowl, established by a local firm, was purchased by Summit Properties, a subsidiary of the Post Corp. of Texas.

At the same time, timber cutting in the area remained at a high level and research and educational agencies were using the area for field laboratories. The Peaks area was being subjected to all the pressures of multiple use and multiple demands. The need to develop a specific Multiple Use plan for the Peaks area within the framework of Forest Service policy and the Coconino Multiple Use Guide became evident.

In 1971, the Forest Service invited the public to participate in forming the plan for the Peaks area. A public meeting was held in Flagstaff where 51 people spoke on aspects of multiple use management of the area, and 546 more wrote to Forest Service officers after hearing about the proposed plans through media announcements.

In May, 1972, the first draft of the San Francisco Peaks Land Use Plan was released for public review. Basically, the Peaks area was divided into three management units, based on elevation. Unit A ranged up to 8000 feet, Unit B was between 8000 and 9000 feet, and Unit C was over 9000 feet. Units A and B were later consolidated and various management alternatives were described for each of the two resulting management units. The public was encouraged to indicate their preferred alternatives for both areas.

A summary of the public input is shown in Table 1. In Units A and B public input indicated a preference for the "Manage for Natural Conditions" alternative. That alternative was not considered in Unit B, but among the alternatives presented for that unit, a preference was expressed for intensive recreation rather than "natural beauty" management.

Table 1 does not tell the whole story of public involvement on this issue. There were other written inputs that proved difficult to classify. Over 100 of the letters received called for the Peaks not to be developed at all, an alternative which was not listed because of existing ski development in Unit C. Moreover, a petition, signed by 88 Indians living 100 miles away, protested development on religious grounds.

The final Plan does not make any statement that these opinions were the reason the Coconino National Forest accepted Alternative 1. The final ruling implies that the recreationists were simply misinformed, as the Plan would not prohibit ski areas and other recreational development. However, the Coconino National Forest had stated the possibilities for expansion of ski areas might be limited.

The Coconino National Forest obtained a reading of public views, but discovered that no clear direction was given. The problem encountered included: how should the input of the Indian petition be weighed against that of the local Chamber of Commerce or that of the landowners directly affected by the decision? Should spoken viewpoints at a meeting be given more or less weight than formal letters? What criteria should be used to evaluate the values of viewpoints offered by businessmen and recreationists? By people living close by or distant citizens? In the Peaks

Table 1.--Summary of public input on San Francisco Peaks land use plan

Management Unit	A and B		C	
Type of input	oral	letter	oral	letter
MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES				
1. Multi-resource use, with constraints to preserve natural beauty	15	26		
2. Intensive reation	9	9	17	68
3. Water production	0	0		
4. Wildlife habitat	0	2	1	1
5. Natural conditions	17	36		
6. Expand basin-exchange. Multi-resource use on remainder	0	0		
7. Natural beauty with constraints toward cultural values			22	38

[1]Oral: speeches at meeting May 20; letter: written input received after May.

[2]Alternative 7 not offered for Unit A and B.

[3]Alternatives 1, 3, 5, and 6 not offered for Unit C.

issue, the Coconino National Forest considered public input as an indicator of management direction, not as a dictator of solutions.

The Forest Service, having chosen its management alternatives on the technical merits of the issue, set out to convince the public that the decision was correct. This effort began with the Plan which explained effectively why a "natural conditions" management emphasis would prevail, and was followed with a slide-tape presentation explaining the directions chosen by the Plan.

The Mogollon Rim Land Use Plan

In 1973, the Coconino joined with the Tonto and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests to develop a land use plan for the Mogollon Rim, a scenic escarpment along which recreational and economic use pressures were increasing. The Forest Service informed the public of the Plan and the opportunity for involvement with media announcements, public meetings, a slide show, and a distribution of 320 copies of the draft statement to government agencies, private organizations, local libraries, and interested individuals. The response was meagre. William Russell of the Forest Service Regional Office stated that: "the Forests received only 98 letters, one petition. . . and one questionnaire. These responses were from a very narrow spectrum of the public with most being negative . . . This lack of public response has serious implications on any analysis of public input. We only know what a small number of consumption groups users . . . feel."

Table 2.--Display of public input on draft Mogollon Rim land use plan

		Number of Inputs	Number of Signatures
MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES			
1. Continue existing management direction "no change"	For	11	11
	Against	1	1
2. Emphasize aesthetic and natural values "Amenities"	For	3	3
	Against	6	7
3. Emphasize more forest production "Commodities"	For	53	87
	Against	1	1
4. Proposed land use plan direction	For	16	19
	Against	3	4

[1]Based on Russell (1974).

The petition, which had 1,159 names, rejected all four of the management alternatives, creating a dilemma as to how the Forest Service should treat it. Region 3 chose to treat the petition separately. It was felt that the alternatives presented in the draft plan "were valid and there seemed to be adequate understanding (Russell: 9). The petition, which included signatures of the residents of the Mogollon Rim around Young, did not change the plan's direction, though its signatures outnumbered the other inputs. The responses to the Forest Service request for citizen participation are shown in Table 2.

Analysis of public input into the Rim Plan illustrates other problems. Attempts were made to categorize the groups that had made certain types of arguments. For example, two thirds of the people who favored maximizing commodities production were identified as grazing permittees. The input analysts treated these inputs more or less as they pleased. "It does appear very reasonable that grazing permittees would favor the Commodity oriented alternatives. It is significant that none of them expressed specific opposition to the Forest Service proposal." (Russell: 5). Thus, the Forest Service could proceed as planned, for the public involvement results had proven predictable.

Timber-Harvesting

Timber is the forest's most significant commercial resource, accounting for about 4-6% of the jobs in Flagstaff and many jobs in other communities. Previous planning of timber management had been uneventful, but the seventh plan was to be shaped under the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, reflecting national developments in public concern. The Forest Service expected that the Coconino's seventh 10-year timber harvest plan would evoke a great deal of public interest.

A draft plan was produced for public inspection in August, 1972; with the final plan to be completed July 1, 1973. A well publicized meeting was held on September 14, in Flagstaff. Only 30 people attended the meeting, despite the fact that certain aspects of the ten-year plan should have drawn wider initial attention.

The timber harvesting plan contained several features that did cause comment by the few who attended. In the first place, the plan called for a deficit cut of 68 percent. Some criticisms still were made about deficit cutting, but the Forest Service pointed out the overcutting was necessary to thin overstocked stands that had resulted from gross overcutting long ago.

A second, more hotly contested issue, was the road construction and improvements called for in the planned timber harvest. The Coconino Sportsmen wrote a highly critical letter which they released to the news media, rather than directing it to the Forest Supervisor, deploring the "overdevelopment of roads". The Sportsmen's message pointed out that the purpose of an EIS is to describe all the impacts of a project and to show how follow-up plans will alleviate or prevent the negative effects. The Coconino National Forest's draft EIS did not specify exactly where roads were planned or how they would be returned to nature after completion of cutting.

Criticism of the road development was also voiced by other groups and individuals though there were varied reasons for it. Letters from the U.S. Arizona Wildlife Society, Arizona Game and Fish Department, National Wildlife Federation and Department of the Interior, indicated a concensus that the draft EIS roads' section was too general. However, the Coconino National Forest Supervisor stated that:

> "We don't know what they want . . . they have torn down the report, but have not commented on alternatives. All they do is belittle our attempts." (Sun, October 4, 1972).

The Coconino Sportsmen went beyond road development to further statements that were not compatible with populist western traditions. William Morrall, speaking for the Club (1972), wrote that "opening up all of these Forests by an excess of roads to people who are not sufficiently educated to use them properly is inviting trouble." The forests would suffer, he continued, from the "lemming-like activity of our populations." The Supervisor replied with vigor that the Forest Service operated in the context of a democratic country, and was not legally charged with creating "King's forests" that could be opened to "the elite few deemed worthy to appreciate their beauty and resources." Overlooking, perhaps, the costs incurred by the Forest Service in picking up trash, helping permittees mend cut fences or broken gates, and preventing or putting out man-caused fires, he went on to refute Morrall's implication that some people just do not appreciate, or know how to act in, the forest.

Three other aspects of the public involvement process in connection with the 10-year timber harvesting plan are significant: timing of events, management goals, and selecting participants. First, the timing of events did not allow adequate opportunity for public viewpoints to be developed and presented. The Coconino distributed the draft EIS on August 10, 1972, and requested comments be submitted by

September 30. Some of the public did not receive their copies until early in September, and comments were submitted late. A Department of Interior spokesman wrote on December 5 regarding possible impact of overcutting and road extension on Sunset Crater and Walnut Canyon National Monuments, and Arizona Game and Fish responded to the draft EIS on November 29, the same day the Arizona Chapter of the Wildlife Society mailed its viewpoints.

The second concern expressed openly by some of the timber plan's critics, was that it seemed that "the primary management aim for the Coconino National Forest is for saw log production." Arizona Game and Fish (1973) quoted draft EIS language to show that the Coconino was guilty of "monoculture management," and further argued that the plan "exemplifies the dominant use philosophy as opposed to multiple use." A Wildlife Society official criticized managing public lands "for the benefit of one resource without regard for others," and threatened "that continuance of this trend will stimulate a public demand for the airing of even minor agency management decisions in the public forum." The Forest Supervisor responded to these comments by explaining the uneven growth aspects of sustained timber yield and offered to provide a "show-me" trip.

A special planning committee composed of two foresters (the Coconino's timber management specialist and the NAU Forestry School Dean) and three lumber company officials had been selected in the early stages of developing the timber harvesting plan. This committee arrived at a cutting figure, which was submitted to the Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce for approval. After the plan had been sanctioned by the Chamber, the public was informed for the first time—a "planning process" which annoyed sportsmen and environmentalists. The Coconino National Forest adopted and implemented the plan on schedule. However, it seems that much of the adverse reaction could have been offset if users of other non-timber resources would have been invited into the process earlier to help shape the draft EIS.

Land Exchange and Development

Two recent land exchange cases, Soldier Wash and Hart Prairie, have dragged on for several years as political issues. Though neither are yet resolved, the same conditions which make it probable that the Forest Service will achieve their goal of obtaining Hart Prairie are closely related to those which have led to frustration over Soldier Wash.

Soldier Wash

Soldier Wash, a 405-acre area surrounded by private lands within the community of Sedona, was being offered by the Forest Service in exchange for privately owned timber lands elsewhere (Thornton). During the mid-1960's, the Coconino National Forest Multiple Use Advisory Committee and the users of the Oak Creek area had offered input toward a Landownership Adjustment Plan, as the Forest Service felt that "this additional base-in-exchange land (including Soldier Wash) was what the community needed and wanted." (Coconino National Forest, 1973C: 2). However, in 1970 when Southwest Forest Industries offered four tracts outside Oak Creek in exchange for Soldier Wash, full-page ads appeared in the Red Rock News encouraging residents to write their Congressmen to halt Sedona's growth through stopping Forest Service exchanges. A scheduled revision of the Landownership Adjustment Plan was well supported but there was strong opposition to two of the exchangable Forest Service tracts. The Forest Service removed the slopes of Airport Mesa from the base-in-exchange classification as it felt that county zoning was too weak to ensure its wise private use. Soldier Wash however, was not removed from the exchange. Local taxpayers associations began to request retention of Soldier Wash by the Forest Service, arguing that any development would present problems because Soldier Wash was an active drainage area.

In April, 1971, Southwest Forest Industries again offered for trade the four tracts totaling 1,384 acres. The proposed exchange would reduce the number of boundary corners on Federal lands and would add some good timber land to the Coconino National Forest. One of the tracts, which included cliffs and banks along East Clear Creek on the eastern borders of the National Forest, would add to the recreational potential of the Forest.

During the summer of 1971, Sedona residents opposed to Soldier Wash exchange kept up steady pressure on Congressman Steiger, Governor Williams, and the Forest Service. Forest Service exchange land had earlier provided their home sites; but now ensconsed in the picturesque Red Rock area, they did not want their views to be cluttered with someone else's new home. The Forest Service called a public meeting on September 16 which was attended by some 200 people. The vast majority of speakers opposed the Soldier Wash exchange. However, one developer wrote the District Ranger afterwards implying that he had felt intimidated, and thus had chosen not to elaborate publicly his development plan.

After allowing 30 more days for written input, the Forest Service began to analyze the situation. The Forester in charge of the Land Exchange program in the District Ranger office wrote that the issue had produced "a definite distrust, and in some cases hostility, toward

the Forest Service because of what the people felt was a lack of feeling for their problems by the Forest Service." He added: "if Soldier Wash is made available for exchange under the proposed plan, no matter how strong the reasons, all the support and confidence gained this summer will be lost." (Wrobley).

Despite the weight of adverse public input, the Forest Service decided to leave Soldier Wash in the revised Landownership Adjustment Plan. Soldier Wash was virtually useless as National Forest, while the tracts offered by the timber company were excellent additions. Formal negotiations for the exchange were completed in October, 1972, but Governor Williams wrote Secretary Butz asking for an end to all proposed land exchanges in the area. Williams warned that Sedona and its environs had "overgrown their present potential to support any more people." (Sun, July 13, 1973) and indicated that it would be best not to create any more private land in the area. Southwest Forest Industries withdrew from the land exchange proposal, but Soldier Wash still remains available as exchange land for the future.

There was a vocal constituency opposed to the Soldier Wash exchange. It was not as obvious that a constituency also existed in support of the plan. Even in Sedona, as a Forest Service forester reported, "many residents . . . have told District personnel, verbally, that they support our program." (Wrobley: 4). Certainly outside Sedona there were many people who, had they been adequately informed, would have agreed with the Deputy Supervisor's arguments that: "acquisition of the land down there by a private party enables us to obtain wild land which more logically belongs under national forest supervision . . . If we keep land in urban areas it just complicates things." (Sun, July 13, 1973). The problem was that the many people who may have agreed with the proposal were silent as they were, for the most part, uninformed. The Coconino's land exchange officer called the outcome a "classic illustration of local involvement by the public viewing only the impacts that might occur to their community or environment. They may or may not have considered the advantages of acquiring the offered land into the National Forest System." These local residents' attempt to stop the land exchange discouraged Southwest Forest Industries from pursuing the deal. Southwest Forest retracted its offer of the 1384 acres forcing the Forest Service to drop the case. "If public involvement of a large magnitude such as on the statewide level had occurred this land exchange may have progressed differently" (Scheier).

Hart Prairie

In July, 1970, Arizona Snow Bowl, which operates by permit on Forest Service land, was purchased by Summit Properties, a firm associated with Dallas' Post Corporation. The Leadbetter family which owned both firms also owned several parcels, totalling 327 acres, on Hart Prairie near the existing Snow Bowl. Summit's plan was to develop a winter-summer resort on Hart Prairie and join it to the Snow Bowl by aerial tramway. This would require that County authorities grant a zoning change and that the Forest Service issue special use permits. Summit had to convince both agencies that the proposals had wide public backing. On June 29, 1971, Forest Service officials and local Chamber of Commerce members met with company representatives to hear their proposals for developments.

The Forest Service's response was that any major development would have to wait for the completion of the San Francisco Peaks Land Use Plan scheduled for November 30, 1972. On October 9, 1971, a public meeting heard suggestions on the draft Peaks Plan, and written input followed. The draft Plan conveyed an impression that the Forest Service considered the Peaks primarily in terms of recreational and aesthetics-preservation values and the agency would not be anxious to accept proposals for large scale development. While this Forest Service position had more to do with the Snow Bowl, located within the National Forest, it obviously effected the development prospects of Hart Prairie.

The Post-Summit Corporations hinted that they might simply close the Snow Bowl if they did not receive more of a positive response from the Forest Service regarding their plans for Hart Prairie (Seaman). While the Forest Service could revoke the Post-Summit permit and let someone else operate the ski area, at least one winter's skiing would probably be lost if the Snow Bowl were closed, and the Forest Service would incur public anger.

In October, 1971, Summit Properties requested re-zoning to commercial and higher density residential classifications. Summit had obtained partial re-zoning in 1970, but returned in October, 1971 for further changes that would allow greater density and additional development of facilities such as a golf course. By April, 1972, County government decisions were favoring Summit, but public opposition to the development was becoming aroused. At first this opposition came from an adjacent land owner, and from several Navajo and Hopi Indians whose tribal religions considered the San Francisco Peaks a holy shrine. A Superior Court

judge ruled against Summit's re-zoning successes in two decisions based on the adjacent landowners' and on the Indians' arguments. Summit appealed, and in January, 1974, applied for further zoning changes. The County Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on January 29, 1974 and some 1,500 people attended the hearing, including large numbers of Northern Arizona University students and Indians from the nearby reservation. Various technicalities led to a second Planning and Zoning Commission hearing on March 28, which was attended by an estimated 1,800 people. When the Commission turned down Summit's request, the company asked for a hearing before the Board of Supervisors. After 15 hours of debate on April 27, 1974, the Board denied the zoning change and declared a year-long moratorium on development of all private lands at altitudes over 8,000 feet.

By this time, Summit began to concentrate on a land exchange that would recoup their considerable investment. Besides the land, the company had spent over $1 million in six wells, one of which produced what Summit claimed was an adequate water supply.

The Forest Service had made its position clear in an official document "The Development of Hart Prairie: A Position Statement," released in January, 1974 in response to the County Planning and Zoning Commission's request for the views of "adjoining landowners." The document commented (1) on the possible effects of development on adjacent public lands, including such impacts as increased damage from wildfire, litter and soil erosion, (2) on the likelihood that local governments would not be able to provide necessary tax-supported public services, (3) on the less obvious environmental damage that might result, such as the effects on ground water levels, and wildlife movements, and (4) on the probability that other cases of private land developments, and further damage, would be encouraged. The document left no doubt that the agency was opposed to the development of Hart Prairie and desired to acquire private land in the Peaks area. The Peaks Land Use Plan, completed a year earlier, had indicated that the Forest Service considered the lower slopes between 8000-9000 feet to be integrally connected to the management of the higher areas, and the agency was committed to obtaining the private parcels therein.

In July, 1974, Summit filed suit against a collection of defendants, including a County Board member, the National Forest Service, and the Coconino's Supervisor Seaman. The Company claimed a conspiracy had denied the legitimate development of its private property. The Forest Service and Supervisor Seaman were later removed from the suit, and, by Fall, 1975, land exchange negotiations between Summit and the Forest Service had commenced. Summit claimed its land and wells were worth far more than the $1.4 million determined by Forest Service appraisers, but the company agreed to the Forest Service offer in October, 1976. The Forest Service has asked for the funds in the 1977-1978 budget.

Forest Service public involvement tactics in the Hart Prairie issue were impressive in some respects. When public concern was building, the Coconino Supervisor and staff effectively coordinated and communicated their position. The Peaks Land Use Plan was interpreted to civic groups and organizations through an effective slide-tape presentation. A sound, responsible Forest Service image was established as the issue developed.

Summit Corporation offered as persistent and sophisticated an opponent as the Coconino has ever faced in a public issue. The company countered a large and emotional "Save the Peaks" constituency with a combination of carrot-and-stick tactics which were at least initially successful with local Chamber of Commerce and labor-related interests. However, some tactics backfired. The conspiracy suit failed to accomplish much, and an attempt to cause sympathetic public officials to intercede with the Forest Service did bring a response from Senator Goldwater, but in support of the Forest Service position against development on the Peaks.

An analogy can be made between Hart Prairie and the tracts offered by Southwest Forest Industries in exchange for Soldier Wash land. It is doubtful if the numbers of people who formed the diverse alliance to "Save the Peaks" would have emerged to promote the Soldier Wash trade. As Southwest Forest Industries had publicized no plan to develop its offered tracts public concern would have had less focus. But Forest Service publicity on what might happen if the present or future owners of the offered lands did try to develop them might have brought some public support for the Soldier Wash trade. The Forest Service's antagonists in the Soldier Wash case were less formidable than the Summit-Post Corporations, and a lower level of support for the Forest Service's policy would have effectively blocked the opponents of the Soldier Wash exchange.

The Cornville Lagoon

In 1969, Oak Creek Canyon Recreational Area contained nearly 40 vault-type toilets for public use. The vaults were periodically pumped by a private contractor and the waste

trucked to a dumping site miles away because no central treatment facilities exist in the Sedona area and the sandy ground does not leach well. Some of the toilets near the stream were found to be leaking and were polluting Oak Creek.

In 1969, federal funds had been allocated to improve the situation, but the Forest Service had waited to see if the town of Sedona would participate in constructing a sewage treatment plant to handle Oak Creek's septic pumpings as well as Sedona's. When it became obvious that the city would not help to build the facility, the Forest Service decided to proceed with the project nevertheless. The Forest Service decided to proceed alone. A study conducted by the Forest Service to determine the best means to dispose of sewage from its vault toilets indicated that an isolated sewage treatment lagoon would best serve present and anticipated future needs. A Forest Service invitation to the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors and the bi-county septic pumpers association to cooperate in construction was rejected because those organizations could not provide their shares of the cost. The Forest Service decided to proceed alone. The agency planned the lagoon in a convenient location so other agencies and organizations could join when, and if, financing problems could be overcome.

A site near the small community of Cornville was chosen since access roads and power lines for power to operate the well pumps were already in place. The plant required a deep well capable of producing 64,800 gallons a day to replace the estimated 20,000 gallons that would be lost daily by evaporation during sewage treatment. There would be no seepage to local water tables because the lagoons would be lined with plastic sheeting. A contract to drill the well was awarded to a New Mexico firm in July, 1974, and drilling operations began. The firm consisted of three brothers, one of whom lived in Flagstaff, and it had won contracts in Northern Arizona before.

Cornville citizens became aware of activity on the nearby federal land when the contract was let. The well-drillers were approached by local residents, apparently told that the Forest Service was constructing a "rest stop." However, this was rejected as not that many people visit the remote town of Cornville. A rest stop one half mile off this rural road seemed curious, and a 12 inch diameter hole is too large for a rarely used rest stop. Moreover, local drillers claimed not to have heard of a contract being advertized and rumors spread that local well drillers had had no opportunity to bid on this government job.

Cornville residents received their first solid information about the project from a community member who was employed by the county Board of Health, one of several agencies involved in the planning stages. Belatedly, twenty-five concerned Cornville citizens attended a meeting to hear the Forest Service plan. Subsequently they sent several letters and a petition with about 250 signatures to the Forest Service requesting that operations be immediately stopped. By November, the 1000 foot-deep well was complete, at a cost of over $55,000, but the public involvement process continued. Finally, 150 angry area residents were told in a packed January meeting that the Forest Service was abandoning the Cornville site because of adverse public reaction. At a third public meeting in February, the Forest Service presented an alternative plan for pumping water from the existing well to a distant lagoon location at great expense. However, the Forest Service finally abandoned the project altogether.

This project might have been successful, had adequate public participation accompanied development from the beginning. According to the Sedona District Ranger: "If we had gone about it in a more open way with the people of Cornville, (the lagoon may have) stood a good chance of being accepted." The Forest Service Design Engineer added: "if we had it to do over, we would have gotten more and earlier public input." A Cornville citizen agreed:

> Probably 40 or 50 percent of the residents would have been against the project initially, but if (the Forest Service) had told us from the start what they wanted to do they could have maybe convinced the opposing groups. As it was there was no way anyone would side with them.

Coconino National Forest personnel believe they had a sound solution to the Sedona-Oak Creek area's sewage disposal problem. Furthermore, they believe Cornville would not have been adversely affected. The failure was clearly one of public information and involvement techniques. An attempt was made to publicize the project in the Flagstaff, Camp Verde and Sedona newspapers, and notices were posted in Cornville to inform the "host" community. Forest Service officials directly concerned with the project now realize that in such a diffused settlement as Cornville, it would have been better to go directly to Cornville residents with information about the project through door-to-door visits or personal letters. Certainly the people of Cornville lacked information about the project. They believed the septic basin would harm their area, and they felt they had not been given chance to help plan the project's location. A better mecha-

nism for informing the community at planning stages might well have saved the project.

Mormon Lake Road

By the early 1970's a five-mile stretch of Forest Highway 3 (FH 3) on the east side of Mormon Lake remained as the last unimproved, and rapidly deteriorating, section of the 60-mile road connecting Flagstaff to the Mogollon Rim Country to the Southeast. The road needed extensive straightening and foundation work to bring it up to standards that would qualify the entire FH 3 for inclusion within the state road system. Coconino county had an agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in which FHWA would finance 70% of the improvement cost and the County would cover the remainder. With Forest Service approval to use National Forest land, the agencies planned to relocate the road atop the bluff overlooking Mormon Lake. Total cost for the April-November 1972 construction was estimated to be $1 million, and the Environmental Protection Agency accepted the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on October 27, 1971. Construction began as planned, but with much of the grading contract completed at a cost of $480,000, work was stopped by a U.S. District Court restraining order issued on September 22, 1972.

The court decision to halt construction was based on claims by certain environmentalists and sportsmen, and a rancher, whose land is located a mile from the new roadbed on the edge of the bluff. They argued that there was already one road, the original, on the east side of the lake, and that a second represented useless roadbuilding. Moreover, several groups (the Governor's Commission on Arizona Environment, the Arizona Wildlife Federation, the Coconino Sportsman) maintained that they had not received copies of the EIS. According to one citizen: "the Forest Service managed to push this project without informing not only the concerned citizenry, but more importantly did not contact such organized groups as would be obviously involved in such a case. . . Our cares and efforts have been made a farce by the very group who might be expected to preserve the country."

Forest Service documents, coupled with the facts at the road site, offer evidence that these claims were false. A public meeting had been held in Flagstaff in August, 1971, sponsored by Coconino County Highway Department and FHWA to air the project design and location. Public opinion heavily favored the relocation. Opposition began to appear after the meeting but as the contracting process took place during Spring, 1972, no further public involvement process seemed necessary. The Coconino National Forest assumed that the lead agencies, FHWA and the County Highway Department, had done that job. But by July, the Arizona Wildlife Federation had drafted a restraining order to stop the project. The Coconino Supervisor explained Forest Service views on the matter, but the Federation proceeded with the legal action and shortly after construction began, the Federation, the Maricopa County Chapter of the Audubon Society, and the local rancher filed suit against the project.

On September 5, U.S. District Judge Copple ruled that the road was located within a recreation area and that the Department of Transportation under NEPA and the 1968 Transportion Act, must prove that there was no feasible and prudent alternate use of the land, and that harm to the area was being minimized. The injunctions were dropped and the restraining order was lifted in June, 1975. By Fall, 1976, the relocated road was virtually complete. Attention turned to the disposition of the old road below the bluff. When public criticism began, the agencies' defense was tactically deficient. The agencies' main arguments against the restraining order were (1) the rest of FH 3 is complete, so it was logical to finish the final 4.18 miles, and (2) too much money had been spent on the new grading to turn back. This logic is inevitably weak. It may be true, as National Forest personnel have pointed out, that these reactions to the suit were those of FHWA more than of the Forest Service, but the court proceedings left an impression that the Forest Service shared FHWA's desire to finish the road for the reasons FHWA stated. The Forest Service did nothing wrong by being involved in the project, but erred in allowing another agency to represent them. The Forest Service should grasp the initiative to explain projects before they start and thus win over as many supporters as possible. FHWA clearly misjudged the volatility of the issue and caused the public furor. The Forest Service, merely issuing a permit, became tarnished unnecessarily.

The National Forest was involved in deciding if the old road should be retained for recreational uses or returned to natural conditions. The road was eventually plowed up.

The Mormon Lake Road Relocation was an issue that should have united environmentalists, sportsmen, government agencies, concerned commercial interests and recreationists. The old road cut through an ecozone that is rare in the area: mixed deciduous tree species with a profusion of wild grape, elderberry, gooseberry, etc., harboring a great variety of bird and animal life. Environmentalists argued that the new roadway would harm wildlife, because high

speed traffic would cross major wildlife trails to Mormon Lake water, but failed to note that the old road crossed the same trails, and was impossible to maintain or keep snow-free. Most persons concerned with environmental impact of Mormon Lake Road were frankly embarassed by the stand taken by groups that had not studied the situation closely. The Forest Service should have encouraged these groups to inspect the site, to consider the alternatives and to evaluate the agency's intentions. After the road became a public issue, the Supervisor did offer show-me trips, but only one person, who later became enthusiastic about the relocation, is known to have accepted. The Supervisor explained that "several times previous to, and during the litigation, invitations were issued to the plaintiffs in the case. . . but to my knowledge, they never took advantage of the invitations." Timing was partly responsible for the inadequate public involvement. The final EIS was not received by some groups at all, and the compressed timing precluded some others, such as Arizona Game and Fish from making any input.

Wilderness

During the 1970's, Congress was critized for not making Federal agencies move towards the acreage targets of the 1964 Wilderness Act. By early 1971, each National Forest had been instructed to reevaluate for potential wilderness additions through the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE) Program. Coconino District Rangers inventoried their possible roadless areas and submitted reports during November-December, 1971. The general public became aware of the new emphasis in wilderness selection four months later when newspapers described seven areas included in the study. In April, 1972, public meetings took place and considerable comment was receive' during May and June. By mid-June, the Supervisor's office had prepared a summary of public response, which the foresters judged "inconclusive." Those summaries, along with the Supervisor's recommendations, were then submitted to Regional headquarters. Only two months, therefore, (April and May) were available for public participation in the wilderness selection process.

Regional Foresters summarized public involvement input on roadless areas in tables, and each suggested area's "score" was evaluated. Only two of seven roadless areas scored a balance of input favoring further wilderness study. One of those two was eventually included in the four areas selected by January, 1973. By October, 1973, when the final EIS was filed with the President's Council on Environmental Quality, another area had been cut out. Of the three areas under formal request for inclusion under the Wilderness Act provisions, one, Fossil Creek headwaters, had scored lowest of the original seven on the public input summary.

The public involvement process was virtually finished by the end of June 1972, and the entire national wilderness proposal was released six months later. When the national proposal was made, three of Coconino's seven areas reported through RARE had been removed from consideration, presumably on the basis of TOTAL OPPORTUNITY COST (TOC) calculations, which included indices of "quality" effectiveness-cost, and public opinion. Local environmentalists proceeded to attack the elimination of the three areas, particularly the San Francisco Peaks.

There is no way to appease those who do not believe the forests should be managed for multiple use once they see the impact of uses other than "their own." Likewise, when wilderness areas are suggested, there will always be some public implacably opposed to any areas set apart from the commercial use permit system. Still others will not be satisfied until the entire forest is wilderness. Given such emotionalism, the Forest Service should, at least, ensure that the procedures of determining wilderness areas have offered adequate access for public opinions.

Some of the public saw the time allowed for participation as too short. The Arizona Wildlife Federation wrote the Regional Forester that, "the extremely short time allowed to study Arizona's National Forests for roadless areas was very inconsiderate and significantly restricted public involvement, and "your staff has done an unacceptable job of inventorizing." The Federation added that 60-odd areas that shared roadless features had not been inventoried in Region Three.

The roadless areas had been examined closely at District Ranger level. The compressed timing of public involvement undoubtedly added to the misunderstandings on the issue. For the general public, the time between press announcements and evaluating input was two months, although most interest groups seemed aware of the RARE process before April, 1972. A better public involvement procedure for this issue would have been to inform groups and companies likely to be concerned with wilderness inclusions during the earliest stages and possibly to involve them in a workshop for group representatives as early as January, 1972. District Rangers could have explained their recommendations, leaving ample time for (1) area tours (2) group representatives to report back to monthly group meetings, (3) more informed reports in interest group newsletters, and, (4) showing each group the conflicting interests.

Another major problem was the handling of the recommendations above the level of the Coconino National Forest. Having been invited to participate at the Forest level, the public was then excluded from following the progress of the recommendations at the Regional and National levels. Forest Service Chief McGuire noted the consequences of this procedure when he warned his Regional Foresters (1972):

> Several of you have expressed concern that it will be difficult not to reveal Regional recommendations because of the intensive level of public involvement which has been carried on. It has been suggested that the credibility of the public involvement process may be endangered if you are not able to announce your recommendations when they are made. The public wants to be able to talk with decision-makers in the involvement process and needs to know what the local line officer decides. We share your concern and have considered the matter carefully. The credibility of the public involvement process must be protected to the fullest extent possible.

Despite this admission, he went on to say that:

> It is also imperative that there be an opportunity to consider the selection of these areas nationally with all information at one place before premature announcements are made. . . . It has been uniformly understood from the beginning and explained to all audiences that the selection. . . would be made by the Chief. The credibility of the public involvement does not necessarily require that the Regional Foresters' recommendations be made public, but rather that you provide the public. . . with meaningful followup information on a continuing basis and that they have assurance that the public input you have received has been accurately passed along to this office.

Why could not the Forest Service inform the public and explain the TOC and other analysis tools? Why was it undesirable to announce the Regional Foresters' decisions? What "meaningful followup information" remained? These were questions asked by local environmentalists particularly in reference to the San Francisco Peaks. Substantively, they were beginning to see that the Coconino National Forest's multiple use plans for the Peaks were compatible with their own views, but the 6-month public involvement vacuum during the wilderness procedure left environmentalists uneasy.

The 1971-1973 wilderness study areas experience also points out a third problem for public involvement, the interpretation of that input. Some environmentalists lost confidence in the Forest Service's commitment to the Wilderness Concept. Their anger might have been muted by explaining the TOC mechanism, assuming, of course, that the calculation <u>does</u> effectively balance all criteria involved in a logical manner. Environmentalists, familiar with how other agencies have manipulated data in cost-benefit analysis, automatically assumed that the Washington Office had performed a political balancing act, arbitrarily slicing National Forest and Region recommendations to produce a national list that would be palatable to Congress and the President. Wilderness supporters had been led to believe public views would be seriouly weighed, but obviously the agency had a different concept of the role of public input. Reporting to the Regional Office, the Coconino National Forest Supervisor reported "a great deal of misunderstanding of our proposals" at the Sedona meeting of April 14, 1972. So the public input was described as "inconclusive." The Supervisor stated that "On balance it seems to us our judgements based on resource requirements and wilderness characteristics are the only remaining justifications for either studying or not studying the areas. . . . "

It would seem that this evaluation resulted from complete dismissal of the unwritten input, an evaluation which did not correspond with that of many observers outside the agency. The <u>Arizona Daily Sun</u> (April 24, 1972) reported that public sentiment at the Sedona meeting, with 100-125 persons attending, "seemed to be overwhelmingly in favor of the wilderness proposals." However, a Forest Service representative saw the Sedona meeting differently and reported:

> It appeared that the majority of those present, being past middle age and apparently from the town of Sedona, were there merely to see what went on, since there was nothing else to do. They seemed little informed and somewhat less interested in the real issues--other than casting a vote "for" or "against" most Wilderness. While the meeting was generally well conducted, it could have been sharpened up considerably by eliminating much of the editorializing and discussion not directly pertinent to the point. I believe that little substantive advice was given by the "public" represented. Perhaps it was because we did not solicit it properly. We both have much to learn if such meetings are worth their while.

If the public meeting, and public involvement generally, were rather sterile processes in the RARE case, this type of attitude may have been to blame. One can empathize with this professional forester's remarks. The same view of

public opinion prevails in many agencies, and is certainly present in the Forest Service. Chief McGuire's directive (1972) to the Regions stated that, in preparing the summary statement on public input, emphasis "should be given to reasons why people want certain areas to be included for wilderness study, as this is more meaningful information than the number of people who favored it." Certainly McGuire's directive leaves no way to evaluate public views for decision-making, because the evaluation of "reasons" avoids the political weight of viewpoints which may not be "valid" but are, nonetheless, politically significant. The public must be clearly told what the significance of its views will be.

Coyote Control

For more than a decade, Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) had carried out annual coyote poisoning programs with the permission of the Coconino National Forest, and a September, 1971 multiple use survey coordinated by the Coconino Range and Wildlife Staff had satisfied the Supervisor that a decision to "favor antelope over coyotes" with "1080" poison stations would not have other adverse consequences. However, on February 8, 1972, six months after the preliminary decision to have a poisoning program on the Coconino National Forest had been made, President Nixon issued an Executive Order banning predator poisons on Federal lands.

The Executive Order halted the coyote poisoning program, but it is likely that it would have been stopped anyway. The Coconino National Forest and the other agencies concerned had met a storm of local resistance which frustrated the program long before the Presidential order killed it. Within a few days of the original request by AGFD that the Coconino National Forest participate in the poisoning program, seven national organizations had petitioned EPA to take action against poisoning programs. The ban on coyote poisoning requested by the seven groups united environmentalists (Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth) with old-style conservationists (Audubon Society) and with animal lovers (the Humane Society). By the time the Coconino National Forest became involved, both sides of the national controversy had formed, and were represented locally by citizens already reading up on the topic in organizational journals. There was every reason to expect a vigorous contest in Northern Arizona.

Coconino National Forest officials indicate that they did anticipate resistance to the coyote poisoning program. The Forest Service had requested public input while AGFD had felt no such public participation was necessary. They acquiesced when it was obvious that the Forest Service would not approve any bait stations until public involvement procedures had been carried out. AGFD agreed to an open meeting, chaired by the Forest Service, so Coconino officials thus appeared to sponsor the project. The Forest Service became a target for public anger when there was no compelling reason for the agency to place itself in such a position.

Moreover, the Forest Service should have determined that there were definite advantages in taking part in the control program. According to the Coconino National Forest Supervisor there was not clearcut proof of the beneficial effects of coyote control, or disproof of possible deleterious impact of 1080 poison on the environment. Several Northern Arizona University (NAU) scientists posed questions about the program such as, What would the effect be on the rodent population? How could AGFD establish a causal relationship between coyotes and antelopes when coyote counts were unavailable and antelopes counts were subject to the 40% error factor of any air-based survey in a forested region? One NAU biologist, using AGFD data, concluded that scientific evidence was not adequate "to justify the poisoning program or to indicate that the program will succeed in its intended result" (Gaud), and Seaman wrote the Regional office in reference to the conflicting interpretations from the one set of data, that (1971: 6):

> This points out the need for either more reliable census and study data to confirm the actual degree of depredation or more objective analysis of the available data without the motive to either justify or scuttle the program. We feel it is essential that some concrete documentation through studies be developed to treat this objective directly.

National decision-makers were also grappling with the coyote dilemma. Representative Poage of Texas, representing the livestock industry, argued that even one steer or sheep killed by coyotes was too many, while Senator Church of Idaho representing the conservationists, stated that poisoning wasn't worth it: "The fact of the matter is that there is little substantive evidence on either side of the issue" (New York Times, June 30, 1973).

Such confusion about the merits of the program may have been responsible for mind-changing by the Coconino National Forest's administrators. Having earlier decided to accept the AGFD plan which would be administered by the Federal Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, the Coconino National Forest decided, "upon further consideration," on a public con-

sultation process, which began with the October public meeting. By early December, pro-coyote public input was pouring in, and Supervisor Seaman wrote Region Three "I have arrived at the decision to disapprove the proposal." But later Supervisor Seaman decided, on January 11, 1972, "After analyzing the facts before us, we have given the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife our concurrance to carry out a control program." Nixon's executive order of February 8, 1972 put an end to this confusion.

The problem with public involvement in the coyote control issue was that the Coconino National Forest became involved with a program whose merits had not been proven. So the public's original doubts about coyote poisoning were fed by inability of the agencies to show the benefits of the program. Then the Coconino National Forest's resolve wavered under public pressure. Had the Coconino National Forest officials been convinced of the merits of the coyote control policy, their next step would logically have been to arouse a public support sector that agreed with the advantages of the program, and would defend it. As it was the Forest Service, aware of the strength of public attitudes on the topic, should have placed the onus of defending the policy squarely in the lap of AGFD. Public faith in the Forest Service is too precious for it to play "fall guy" for other agencies.

Administrative Reorganizations

Two principles are in direct conflict in all reorganization issues: (1) Can money be saved? (2) Can an effective communication link be retained with the agency's clientele?. The Coconino National Forest has done a good job of keeping both principles in mind during reorganization planning. Deputy Supervisor Holmes described the criteria to include administrative economy and continued services. On a second level of importance not to compete with these two, was "the economic impact on any community" (Sun, December 11, 1974).

The Coconino National Forest has been involved in a series of reorganization plans since the early 1970's. First, regional consolidations were considered in which the National Forests in Arizona would have come under an enlarged San Francisco office. The purpose of this reorganization was to place all land management agencies under a proposed Department of Energy and National Resources to reduce Federal administration costs. However, Congress rejected this plan in July, 1973.

These local Executive branch reorganizations did not fail because of local opposition, though there was some. An Arizona Daily Sun editorial (July 24, 1973) accurately presented local concerns:

> A point in favor of the existing setup is that strong links have been built between Flagstaff and New Mexico during the past years. . . . The Albuquerque officials are well known in this area. But, more importantly, they know the area. . . . It would take time and money to build the same rapport and understanding with forest officials in California.

The Forest Service then turned its efforts toward economizing at the National Forest level. The Apache and Sitgreaves National Forests were merged during 1974 to save $600,000 annually in Region Three operating costs. The town of Holbrook did complain about losing 55 jobs in a town of only 5,500 people, but the Forest Service proceeded because the reduction in services were offset by the administrative savings. "Holbrook", the departing Sitgreaves National Forest Superintendent remarked, "has never really been a logical headquarters since it's 40 miles away from the forest" (Sun, December 11, 1974).

Then, in late 1974, plans were announced for several other reorganizations involving the four north-central Arizona National Forests. Public meetings were scheduled in Flagstaff, Williams and Prescott. The list of options for public consideration seemed broad, including the alternative of "no change in any National Forest boundaries as they now exist. No redistribution of payroll between communities." (Sun, December 6, 1974). The schedule called for public input until December 20, the final plan by February 15, 1975, and any reorganization by July 1. The Forest Service study team developed a list of alternatives, and supplied data on the size of present payrolls in the affected communities and the probable impact of each reorganization proposal.

Some public objection was predictable, but enough people in the area objected so that the reorganization plans were all dropped. For example, some cattlemen argued that their paperwork would double because permits would straddle two Forests while timber industry representatives indicated that centralized business management would lead to confusion. Further, local officials, speaking at a packed meeting in Williams, argued that their town could not stand to lose $440,000 in annual payroll, 22 homes on the real estate market, 36 students from the school district, and of several "high caliber families" from the community. (Sun, December 11, 1974).

Four months after this meeting, Region Three announced that, despite the fact that some

of the alternatives would have provided major saving, only minor boundary changes and some service consolidations would take place. The acting Coconino National Forest Supervisor explained that public relations considerations had been the essential factor in the decision. "The Forest Service prides itself on being decentralized with many different offices on the local level. People like to be able to visit these offices for aid in solving their related problems" (Sun, March 7, 1975). Obviously the primary considerations, services and administrative savings, had given way to the secondary factor of economic impact on local communities.

The economic criteria for reorganization were objectively desirable, and should have succeeded. The reaction of the town of Williams, however, was the deciding factor in rejecting the reorganization. Based as the criteria described by Deputy Supervisor Holmes, local economic impact should have been a secondary-level consideration. For example, in the Apache-Sitgreaves example, the town of Holbrook may not have pushed their arguments hard enough. By making enough noise they could presumably have stopped the dissolution of the Sitgreaves Forest. The point is that if Northern Arizona Forests have declining budget allocations relative to costs, Agency officers should have mobilized the potential constituency in favor of reorganization.

II. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT LESSONS

A Perspective on the Purpose of Public Involvement

The Coconino National Forest's experience points out fundamental questions about the purposes of public involvement. In fact, the evolution of administrative agencies in general raises these questions. Part II of this report will begin with a discussion of the basic purposes. As National Forest experiences suggest, the Forest Service has given more thought to HOW, than to WHY, it involves the public. Present tactics can be perfected, but if they are not appropriate in the first place, the effort would be wasted. Clarity of general purpose should precede attention to the tactical details.

Why involve the public? Does the Forest Service "bring citizens in" on its decision making because it must do so in order to avoid controversy? There are common sense reasons to commend this basically defensive posture. As a major public land managing agency, the Forest Service offered a convenient target for the sudden increase in demands to participate that emerged during the 1960s, but the agency reacted in an overly defensive manner to this challenge.

Behan (1966) described the Forest Service's philosophical development from B. E. Fernow to the present. He argued that the overly protective, "trusteeship" role of professional foresters continued into the era of public participation, despite more recognition of the political aspects of forestry. It has proven difficult for foresters, as professionals, to accept the inevitable consequences of American democracy, that "even under normal circumstances the good of the land must always defer to human welfare as the basis for judging goodness and badness." The foresters' reaction to modern, participatory politics was that of the Omnipotent Forester, to use Behan's term: the forester knows what's best for his trust, and public views are greeted with suspicion. However, I have not found much evidence that the Coconino National Forest is staffed by "Omnipotent Foresters." Rather, the foresters on this Forest seem to accept wholeheartedly the call to take public involvement seriously. Nonetheless, there is little clarity about the purposes of public involvement programs, disillusionment and sometimes consternation over the results.

This lack of clarity is due to the fact that administrative agencies have been given responsibilities that make them anachronistic aspects of a democratic society. Congress has empowered administrative agencies to (1) collect needed data, thus circumventing the input system of elected party leaders and platforms, (2) make decisions, thus circumventing the representative-legislative process, and (3) carry out enforcement. The public agencies have been making decisions in a temporary political vacuum. Thus, in a sense, the present-day participatory emphasis represents a restoration of the political balance in our democracy - a balance that was temporarily lost because the complexity of problems developed faster than the institutional capacity to deal with them through representative procedures.

An agency that wishes to function well must function as a complete microcosm of a political system, devoted to the management of, and the resolution of conflict over, specific aspects of American life. The Forest Ser-

vice, if the agency has confidence in its ability to manage forestlands for the common good, should appropriately view its contacts with the public as the long run creation of a broadening "constituency". Some critics of Forest Service public involvement practices argue that the agency's over-defensiveness comes from a failure to think as an active contestant for public support. Gale employs the example of "losing" the North Cascades to the Park Service to show that the Forest Service did not recognize the agency's "task environment" constituency (1973).

> Ideally, (the Forest Service's goal) should be public service. Agencies, however, also have other important goals, such as expansion, size, protection of positions of personnel, and power and influence. Environmentalists are in the task environment of a timberland management agency because they can influence laws which define the service of the agency, budgets and appropriations, (and) the amount of land under their jurisdiction.

At first such reasoning sounds like a prescription for inflated bureaucracy, but according to Gale, it is Congress' job to keep spending and bureaucracy within reason. Meanwhile, each agency, if it has confidence in its function, should develop its constituency and retain its "political base". As Thompson and McEwen (1958) put it, "Competition for society's support is an important means of eliminating not only inefficient organizations but also those that seek to provide goods or services the (agency's) environment is not willing to accept."

The Forest Service seems afraid to be "aggressive" vis-a-vis public attitudes. A feeling persists that it is unfair and cynical to use public involvement to ward off political controversy. Hendee et al (1973) stated that, "we do not regard (developing support for current Forest Service roadless area plans) as a legitimate objective for Forest Service public involvement." But later, they write (1973: 24) "more involvement can result in better acceptance of a final decision, because fewer people will feel they were excluded. More involvement lends credibility to the whole effort." This is certainly the development of support, and confusion over whether such a purpose is legitimate is surely unnecessary. The molding of a favorable climate for public policies is definitely a valid function for public involvement. As Fairfax (1974) put it, the concern with playing a properly neutral (or passive) role:

> would seem to be another outgrowth of the siege mentality that has underlain so much of the Forest Service involvement program. The agency has become so sensitive to public criticism that it often seems to approach the public and the issues with fright. Rather than appear to be trying to "sell" the Agency, they would rather say nothing at all or just "listen." As it becomes more and more open to public discussion of its programs the Forest Service is going to gain allies and adversaries regardless of whether it intends to or not. Therefore, on Ad Hoc committees, advisory groups and other such groups, the Forest Service is, whether it is explicit or premeditated about it or not, building and coopting support groups.

Public involvement experience of the Coconino National Forest falls short of the more optimistic, less defensive, posture suggested by Fairfax. National Forest Officers do not view public involvement as a continuing process of constituency development, influencing the community to see the Forest Service as effective and open to public concerns. Sometimes Coconino National Forest officials sense this more fundamental purpose of public involvement, (Holmes, 1969), but more often, they are buffeted from crisis to crisis, reacting to angry citizen groups with specific complaints. The public has, subconsciously at least, become the "enemy" (Frear, 1973).

The Public Involvement Process Reconsidered

I have argued that the Forest Service is too "specific", defensive, and crisis-oriented in dealing with the public. Nevertheless, crises do occur, and the let me show how the Forest Service must be able to defend itself. To show how this can be done, I shall employ four categories for analysis, related to the five "phases" of public involvement used in Forest Service literature: issue definition, collection, analysis, evaluation, decision implementation. Each of these phases is "linked to the others in a complex, interdependent fashion." (Stankey et al, 1974). Thus, failure in any phase will hinder the entire public involvement process.

The entire Forest Service process is specific-issue oriented. As stated in the previous section, I believe that the agency should devote more attention to laying the ground work for successful public involvement well in advance of specific issues. Nonetheless, tactics of handling specific issues cannot be ignored. The Forest Service should assume that any issue has the potential for public controversy. From the cases considered in Part I, the worst public involvement experiences occurred on what the Forest Service wrongly assumed were relatively innocuous questions: such as

4 miles of road, and a few wretched coyotes. Each National Forest should begin its reexamination with the tactics for specific exercises in public involvement. When time allows, thought should be given to linking the overall program's tactics toward more realistic purposes.

Policy Formulation

The Coconino National Forest's practice has been to assemble a draft policy statement for each issue before the public involvement phases begin. In fact, the foresters point out the technically feasible alternatives; then the public may react. There is a strong current of opinion within public involvement literature that contradicts this "technically sound" approach. Bolle has stated (1971) that:

> Participation must mean full participation or else it is no participation in reality. The word participation does not lend itself very well to degrees. Participation implies action by those involved, not necessarily equal action but action and interaction of some kind."

Bolle admits that the decision process consists of several steps. "But note well," he continues "the question is not in which steps of the process the public should participate. To raise that query is ridiculous. If there is participation at all it must be within all the process itself - all aspects of the process or none. Forest Service researchers seem to agree with this concept, at least in principle. Hendee et al, (1974) stated that: "Advice from key members of the public at (the issue definition) stage can assure that no interests or reasonable alternatives are overlooked." The feasible alternatives that go into a draft plan should include the political limitations, and the only way to ensure that they do is to routinize contact with the public at the initial planning states (Reich, 1975). There are several ways to ensure political realism for project alternatives.

1. The Forest Service might consider more continuous and planned contact, up to and including the appropriate Representatives and Senators. These officials will become involved in any disputes anyway, so it would be logical to appraise them of plans.
2. More non-agency representation on planning teams would be useful. In the 10-year Timber Cut example, industry representation dominated the planning committee and amenities groups were not included. The Coyote Control plan would have gone differently had the Coconino National Forest solicited advice from outside the two concerned agencies before becoming committed to the Coyote Control plan. Bringing outside groups in on the Roadless Area Inventory at an earlier phase in the planning would have overcome the problem of the very short time allowed for input.
3. The Agency should make a systemmatic effort to know the human resources of its constituency. The varying performances of groups to the Coconino' Multiple-Use Guide review serves as an example of the obvious virtue of the Ad Hoc Committee, or the Workshop, over the older Standing Advisory Committee. The full resources of universities, museum research staffs and private interest groups should be imaginatively used, as early as possible in a project, and as a habit rather than as a special procedure.

Bringing in the most informed sectors of the public early in the planning process does not mean the Agency should allow public domination of alternative-setting. The Forest Service must retain the lead. The recommendations given above insure that draft plans will not be "sprung" on the public without a serious effort to ensure that the draft alternatives are politically viable.

Obtaining Public Consent

The second phase spans, in most cases, the period from announcement of a draft plan's availability and the "due date" for comments. Here, public involvement should be managed in order to increase the Agency's organizing role while decreasing political vulnerability. On too many occasions the Forest Service puts itself in the position of interest-arbitrator when it does not have to play this role. In the open public meeting, agency officials stand at the front of the room and the audience looks accusingly at them. The Forest Service should get the participants to look at each other; it should act as an organizer.

I am not arguing that open meetings are never justified, but it would be better to have the open meeting preceeded by other forms of public involvement. The Reinkes (1973) from the California Region have presented an interesting description of how a variety of procedures were dovetailed to develop a management plan for the Chiquita Basin in California. Key citizens were identified from district and forest key people and organization lists, from groups who had used the area previously, county planners, single-interest group leaders who might be concerned because of the specific proposal, and elected officials. These were personally invited on a "show-me" workshop. Field workshop participants were divided into groups of 15, each led by a Forest Service leader and each participant was provided with a written report giving technical features of the area and sug-

gesting alternatives. The report was not a "draft plan" but did convey the technically feasible options: the greatest apparent natural resources were scenery, recreational potential and proximity to population centers. After the trip each group prepared a recommendation. The Forest Service then used a public meeting to spread the issue to a broader audience. The general public was being presented with options already based on considerable participation by a balanced representation of interests.

The key to this combination of techniques was the field-workshop. "Each situation may need an approach tailored to its particular habitat and use characteristics. But our experience suggests there is much in favor of an approach that lets different publics help discover a reasonable compromise on the ground" (Reinke and Reinke, 1973). Admittedly, the target issue must be geographically discrete. Otherwise, a "show-me" trip could not cover the territory and expose participants to the problems. Some of the issues that have confronted the Coconino National Forest, such as Soldier Wash, Cornville Lagoon, and Mormon Lake Road could have been handled using this procedure.

The Reinkes advocate that public participants should be made "members of the team." While Fairfax (1974) indicates that the public who are asked to participate "almost always emphasize. . . their satisfaction at being consulted regarding government policy." Obtaining real public involvement at an early stage may solve several problems at once. First, the Forest Service should actively identify citizens and groups likely to be affected by policies and recruit their participation. The Coconino National Forest has had troubles when they have submitted problems to the public at a later stage in the issue's development, and this error is compounded by introducing the topic, already at the draft plan stage, in open meetings rather than in workshop-type settings. Wagar and Folkman (1974) describe the difficulty with open meetings. "In large public meetings, interest group leaders too often pander to the prejudices of their followers, turning such gatherings into adversary proceedings rather than give-and-take bargaining efforts." Wagar and Folkman believe the best public participation procedures "will create sustained interaction among representatives of interested parties so that tradeoffs can be identified, opportunities for mutual advantage explored, bargains made and compromises struck. Such sustained interaction seems most likely to be achieved within small group settings." The Coconino National Forest found that the open meetings do not encourage open-mindedness, and rarely attract many people in any case. Obtaining attendance, however, may be a responsibility of the Forest Service and other public agencies. Our society encourages "good citizenship", and while there is evidence that our political process goes smoothly when the citizenry is not too involved, in theory all public agencies ought to try to force us to live up to our moral philosophy (Fairfax, 1974).

The best approach is to combine the two techniques, as was done for the Chiquita Basin experience. Smaller workshops are more likely to produce "innoculation effect," which reduces "polarity between interest groups" (McKinley, 1951). Then, with the tendency to grandstand hopefully defused, the public meeting can broaden the issue-audience.

Selecting the Participants. The well planned public involvement process, whether it deals with show-me trip-seminars involving discrete problems, or workshops reviewing large-scale management plans, should begin with small groups. However, the key to the process is the recruitment of people for the small groups that initiate the public involvement process. Each National Forest has an adequate constituency from which to choose. So, the first essential is to know that constituency. Agency personnel already serve in civic organizations and are valued members of the community. They respond to invitations to talk to educational and civic groups. However, they should make even more conscious attempts to be active in community interest groups, and to employ what is learned there in the public involvement process. Traditional vehicles for public contact, such as the Grazing Advisory Committee, have been lost, but they could be partly replaced. Cattlemen would not resent the Agency's showing an active interest in what they are doing. The Sierra Club would hardly consider a Forest Service member to be a spy. However, Forest Service personnel are reluctant to get too involved as they may feel that professional image will be "tarnished" by identifying with a special interest. Some feel they must remain aloof from such "pressures", a reaction that would be understandable, though no less unfortunate. The benefits of this policy, if applied ten years ago on the Coconino National Forest, would have been great. Public support for the Forest Service's position regarding Hart Prairie would have been even stronger. A constituency supporting the Soldier Wash exchange because of the high qualities of the land offered by Southwest Forest Industries may have offset the objections of the Sedona landowners.

Besides knowledge of the feelings of groups, greater involvement in the community will broaden the outlook of the Forest Service participants themselves. Participation could lead to concrete ideas on who, among the public,

seem genuinely interested in problems of National Forest management. Often key people and key organization are too unresponsive to "new" input and incoming members of a highly transient community. There should be more emphasis on individuals and less on the President-of-this or the Chairman-of-that. Such people are often too busy to be good workshop participants, if they show up at all. The need is to find a number and variety of interested citizens on whom to rely for participants in settings that offer more complete involvement.

The Forest Service has no standard procedure for selecting participants in the public involvement process. There is doubt as to whether they should involve everyone whom they think might be affected, or just those people who seem already to be concerned. Forest Service Information and Education functions have not been clearly differentiated from Inform and Involve Programs which deal with specific management issues. Public Involvement and the Forest Service (Hendee, 1973), calls on the agency to "increase efforts to identify disadvantaged groups and explore how National Forest resources can benefit them. Make special efforts to obtain their views on issues that affect them. Recruit more members of minorities to help in these contacts." Certainly, Information and Education (I & E) programs create a broader constituency and promote understanding of resource management decisions by expanding sections of the general public who know something of the activities of the Agency to include groups who had not previously been conscious of the Forest Service's role. I & E programs also generate feedback so that the agency can, in turn, serve a broader public in the future. Forest Service I & E efforts have recently concentrated on involving urban people, particularly racial minorities, in programs of recreation and environmental education based on use of National Forest resources. A basic precept of I & E programs is that "the Forest Service should strive to involve as many citizens as possible who are potentially affected by a resource decision or interested in it" (Hendee, 1973). (emphasis added).

The Inform and Involve programs are meant to bring already concerned elements of the public in on current decisions, sometimes without much time to spare. Thus, for specific issues, it is better to concentrate on sectors of the public that are already involved; the Inform and Involve function. For the more long range issues, emphasis should be on involving those who as Hendee (1973) feels, are "less interested in the national forests than they ought to be"; the I & E function.

If the timing for an issue allows enough leeway, affirmative action may encourage participation by other sectors of society such as the minorities and the poor. I & E visits to organizations within their communities by Forest Service line officers or area management specialists may produce interest in Forest Service activities. However, it is a mistake to ask these groups for input on specific issues. It is better to involve these organizations in the on-going I & E efforts.

The Forest Service should make an aggressive effort to be involved in the organizations of a community's mainstream. Americans, for all the myth of individualism and self-reliance, are notorious "joiners" (Banfield: 17-18), so understanding the "sociogram" of a community's various organizations creates a system for contacting an extremely large number of people. In fact, this knowledge of organizations may be a better source of information then issue-specific public opinion surveys. Bultena and Rogers (1974) found, however, that groups which emerged voluntarily to express views on an Army Corps of Engineers project presented a different set of preferences than did a public opinion survey from the same area. Moreover, organizing and carrying out polls takes time and money, and it is more logical, given the constraints, to involve those sectors of the public who are already interested in more finite, short run issues. Evaluating the public involvement process for the national roadless-area review, Hendee (1974) advised a policy of differentiating between "demographic representation which reflects the proportionate distribution according to sex, residence, etc., and interest representation which reflects the extent to which groups affected by a decision are represented. . . The former can't be achieved through routine public-involvement procedures; the latter must be."

Analysis of Public Viewpoints

There are unresolved questions concerning this phase: (1) the techniques of evaluating data, centering around CODINVOLVE (Clark et al, 1974), do not accomplish what they are intended to, and, (2) the bias in the evaluation process toward "quality" input causes the Forest Service to underestimate the crucial role of emotions in political behavior.

Evaluation Techniques. Some National Forests have used the CODINVOLVE system (Jack), and undoubtedly it has certain advantages. Data are retrievable (and/or traceable) which means that Forest Service personnel can reproduce for the doubting citizen a record of evaluation for every written input (Hendee et al, 1974a). Moreover, presentation of data in neat tabular form provides decision makers with an

overall picture of how responding citizens viewed the alternatives. The advantages stop there, given the present usage of results.

On the otherhand, CODINVOLVE gives the public the impression that their views are more important than they really are. Sally Fairfax (1974) stated, in the study of CODINVOLVE as applied in Region 8, that "Not only is Codinvolve unacceptable for what it purports to do, the thrust of the Codinvolve method is all out of harmony with appropriate directions in the involvement program. Codinvolve is, at best, a method designed to provide for summarizing, storing and retrieving input." She described the methods, then added that "Putting aside momentarily the question of whether or not such a set up is necessary, it seems obvious that CODINVOLVE is a very inefficient way to go about achieving its limited objectives." She also points out that CODINVOLVE was designed to handle thousands of inputs, but that, for such a high volume of letters and petitions it becomes too costly (at $1-2 per input). It diverts funds away from other aspects of public involvement towards "a mere bookkeeping operation." She concluded that, in Region 8, CODINVOLVE is not being used as it was intended. Fairfax then shows a sample CODINVOLVE table and adds "It is worth noting that this same table could be produced by storing inputs in two cardboard cartons marked Pro and Con and counting them at the close of the input period." Fairfax characterizes CODINVOLVE's summary table as "a strictly nose count operation with absolutely no indication of substantive or site specific information."

CODINVOLVE <u>is</u> intended to provide an accounting of the reasons people give, and the numbers who give them, along with a picture of general feelings, pro or con. However, Fairfax is correct in that CODINVOLVE has been substituted for more important aspects of public involvement, perhaps because they are more difficult to master. CODINVOLVE may delude Forest Service personnel into thinking they have carried out effective public involvement merely because they have used a sophisticated evaluation tool. CODINVOLVE instructions warn that the procedures are not simple, so this "difficulty" encourages an illusion of "really working at" public involvement. It is far more important for the Forest Service to know its constituency and keep high-salience publics up-to-date on Forest Service actions as an on going process.

CODINVOLVE should be put in its proper place. It is important that input analysis not serve as a psychological substitute for overall public involvement, and that the Forest Service be candid about how results of analysis are used. For example, the Coconino National Forest's Wilderness and Peaks Land Use issues show systematically tabulated inputs were not useful. As the eventual decisions went counter to the majority of viewpoints expressed, the Forest Service should have been satisfied with general impressions of public views. Fairfax makes the valid argument that the Forest Service should not goad the public.

> If the Forest Service reports the impact of the public's contribution in terms of 45% favor a wilderness designation and 13% want motor cycles, then they invite and almost require a straight turn-out-the-vote attitude on the part of the public. Such charts delude people into thinking that a plebecite is being held. If, after reporting the data in that way, the Forest Service should then, even for very good and true cause, select the "less popular" alternative, they will be in richly deserved trouble.

This dilemma can be solved without abandoning CODINVOLVE, but the Forest Service must be quite open about its use of CODINVOLVE in analyzing public involvement.

<u>The Role of Emotions</u>. The second major question is the value of "emotional" input. The coyote control issue indicates the problems that arise when a heavy emphasis is placed on "quality" input. Jones, a Region Three Wildlife Management specialist from Albuquerque, commented that, in the public meeting such as one attended by some 275 people, the "facts" of the issue should be clearly presented before viewpoints are encouraged from the floor. Jones' purpose was to reduce the amount of "emotionalism" that was palpably present, a typical, but unfortunate reaction. Many decision makers reject viewpoints that seem based on "emotion." One citizen who observed the October 27 meeting wrote the Supervisor afterwards that, "It has been my observation that anyone who presumes to disagree with the State or Federal bureaucracy is automatically labelled 'emotional'." In a memo to Region Three, the Supervisor tried to sort out the "emotional" from the constructive input, and as might be expected, he indicated that much of the oral testimony, particularly the opposing viewpoints, should be considered "emotional". He stated that, "specific objections to the program, backed up by facts or suggested alternatives, were the exception rather than the rule." (1971a) The agencies concerned, Supervisor Seaman reported, had sorted out the "emotional or vague objections" and had decided that they were "all but impossible to answer." People responsible for them were "uninformed," or had been "prompted" by others to testify, and "can never be answered to their satisfaction." It is not clear whether the Supervisor was recommending that, if <u>all</u>

the objections had been purely emotional, the agencies would obviously want to proceed with the project as if there had been no objections at all. His final decision to go ahead with the poisoning program may have derived from this.

To the political scientist, emotions are often highly pertinent political behavior. It is likely that every actor in the coyote control controversy was motivated by some sort of emotional relationship to the issue. Hunters like to hunt, Freud would have said, for psychic gratification, and therefore have emotional reasons for wanting their public agencies to favor antelope over coyote. The productivity of the Game and Fish Department is the number of animals available and permits sold, and the harvest these produce. Perhaps the Forest Service read a close relationship into partial data on coyote and antelope populational fluctuations because its commercial clients, the cattle and sheep growers, would sympathize. Obviously, one can connect all the combatants with emotional motivations. In fact, a Hopi Indian opposed the 1080 poisoning plans in the following, legitimate plea: "I, as a Coyote clansman, hope you will not exterminate us as we have our place here as the important link in the life of the Hopi." When a citizen votes, defends his country, or does anything else that diverts time from his leisure or livelihood, he has been emotionally activated to do so.

At the Coyote Control hearing, Coconino officials felt that many of the participants were college students who had been coached by professors to make "pro-coyote" statements. The Deputy Supervisor correctly stated in response to a draft of my report, that

> "perhaps 'emotional' is not the proper terminology for some of what we heard,' but when student after student stands up with tears in their eyes and says such a program would 'upset the balance of nature', it's hard to categorize that input as valuable, emotional or not. Perhaps from your discussion of emotions we should further break the category down into valid emotions and invalid emotions."

The only way to defend a policy that has many people emotionally against it is to show patiently and conclusively that the policy, though regrettable, is utterly necessary to achieve a valid goal.

The public involvement process is usually assumed to be primarily directed at specific management issues. "Good" inputs are "specific" inputs. I do not agree with Fairfax's view that, whenever possible, an agency should try to avoid a specific issue orientation for public involvement, but the rationale is logical. To involve the public in all issues at all stages will ensure that the Forest Service hears the same things from the same people; inertia will build up. However, if the open-invitation approach to public involvement was deemphasized in favor of a more invitational, workshop-oriented approach, based on rotational selection from a broader constituency, the boredom factor would be neutralized. This is an important point because the Forest Service should try to involve the public in a broad selection of issues.

Thus, the question of the "value of emotional input" will not go away. Public involvement ought not to shy away from specific issues, but the Agency must come to grips with the value of emotions, even on specific issues where "quality" input has always been highly valued. This dilemma of "quality" or "quantity" input is inescapable. It is always easier to deal with ideas based on the data, and if objections are followed by stated alternatives. Nonetheless, "emotional" input cannot be ignored, because it is impossible to draw an objective line between "emotional" and "quality" as input categories.

An approach to the problem would be for the Forest Service to eschew any temptation to employ such categories for discriminatory purposes in its evaluations. Caputo (1973) refers to the "tendency of some policy analysts to discuss the reactions and feelings of the citizens as either uneducated or irrelevant". However, Forest Service literature is not clear on how the "emotions" versus "quality" question should be treated. Hendee (1974) reminds us that emotional inputs are important when he says that, "to resource managers, 'quality' inputs were well reasoned, site specific, fully informed and couched in meaningful management terminology. Such inputs are particularly useful, but they are not characteristic of the general, often superficial and emotional input received. Whether well reasoned and detailed or not, all input expresses values, and definition of these values is the overriding objective of public involvement." However, while indicating that emotional input is valid, other Forest Service social scientists "agree that some effort should be directed at acquiring more site-specific or issue-specific input, if only because such information is more readily usable" (Stankey et al, 1975).

The confusion is understandable, but the line officer who must include the public input dimension in his decision is still faced with a dilemma. Gale points out that the confusion extends to the top eschelons of the Agency. For the Roadless Area Review, Supervisors were instructed to obtain "site-specific" (which means quality) input where possible. Gale (1973)

cites an interesting case where:

> The Chief's report on the roadless area review does indicate that specific comments were most helpful. Yet, a letter in favor of wilderness study on a specific area on one eastern Oregon forest counted only one-twentieth as much as an "I'm in favor of multiple-use" letter which only mentioned the area in passing . . . it is far easier to generate "I'm in favor of more wilderness" statements than it is to provide specific statements in favor of certain areas. Yet the Forest Service gave much more credence to these general statements.

The best approach to the problem is to realize the emotional nature of all political behavior and attitudes, and to feel fortunate when someone expresses their emotions in the form of management alternatives supported with objective-looking data. Frear (1973), public information official on the Willamette, has assessed the problem perfectly when he said: "While it may be true that emotion is the enemy of reason, it is also true that emotion can be a better reflection of a man's opinion than the blank, noncommittal face of a professional. One problem in our masculine world is that we are uncomfortable in the presence of emotion." Frear's defense against this syndrome is to continually remind himself that emotions are ubiquitous. "I have found that it is best for me to adapt a frame of reference. What is there that turns you off? Is it drugs, taxes? My personal hangup is hunting. I am well aware of all the sound game management reasons for permitting it. But I still oppose the needless slaughter of beautiful wild creatures." Frear continues "I understand my own emotion. And so when a fellow comes in who says it offends him to see a tree cut. . . I can dig this cat."

Maintaining An Effective Public Involvement Process

Public Involvement is time consuming, but in the 1970's, no significant resource-management agency will be able to avoid it, legally or practically. The only question is how to spend the time fruitfully. There has been too much emphasis on input evaluation, and on meeting procedures and formats. Not enough thought has been given to the reasons for communicating with the public.

After decision-making, the contemporary Forest Service procedures are to turn to justifying what was done. In some ways this is good as it means the agency is maintaining contact with members of the public who had viewpoints. The Coconino National Forest's efforts along this line have been impressive. Higher level officials know key people and respond to their views. They answer written criticisms fully, offer show-me trips, and take the "feedback" phase quite seriously. I do not agree with Fairfax's (1974) criticisms of this approach as just another manifestation of the Agency's "siege mentality." Her objections to the emphasis on "feedback" in Forest Service literature are based on her feeling that the agency is trying to "cover its tracks," using feedback as a sort of ceremonial recognition device, by which the Forest Service is trying to show the public that "their input is being used." But Fairfax takes the criticism too far, arguing against including in impact statements copies of correspondence with agencies and individuals during the "draft criticism" phase. I agree that it should not be necessary to include all input and responses, but it is a valuable and educational practice to include the more penetrating comments. The "public involvement appendix" to impact statements is often the most illuminating section. The agency should use written inputs as an educational device, prefacing appendices with a statement that "the following responses indicate some of the reactions to the draft plan."

This brings us back to the philosophical questions on the purposes of public involvement raised early in Part Two. If the purpose of public involvement is to develop a constituency and to create a setting in which special interests identify each other rather than the Forest Service as the problem, many of the present weaknesses in public involvement procedures will be automatically reduced. The agency needs, above all else, to aggressively get to know the public because to be out of touch with the views of the public is to abdicate influence on those views. The Forest Service needs to remind the public of sensible constraints necessary to operate within limits of our resources. Also, lack of public faith in the Forest Service will increase public reliance on other solutions, or other agencies. Edward Crafts (1973) a former Deputy Chief, has stated that "so far we foresters are flunking the course. We have been following, not leading." Crafts believes that the Forest Service failed to recognize that, in the face of animosity towards the ugliness of clear-cutting, it did no good to insist on the technique's validity as a form of even-age timber management. The agency should have assured its constituency that valid management techniques may come second to mass sensitivities. If this were the Agency's typical response, Crafts wrote, the public would not have responded by allowing the Executive Branch and Congress to starve the Agency financially. Similarly, Twight and Catton (1975) argue that "most of the National Parks set aside since 1916 and the National Park Service itself--might never have been es-

tablished if the U.S. Forest Service had been willing to meet at least some of the demands of the aesthetically-oriented recreation groups." The Agency was not sensitive to public feelings, and thus was unable to meet them with acceptable policies.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

To overcome the problems outlined in the preceeding pages, the Forest Service should encourage its people to search out opportunities for participating in a broad range of community interests. Regular visitation to classes in forestry schools, and environmental science programs, membership and active participation in recreational and environmental groups, and establishing means of maintaining regular contact with commercial users should be encouraged as much as possible. The regional Cattlemen's Association could be encouraged to develop a standing committee, with Forest Service representation, that could accomplish virtually the same function as the former Advisory Committees.

Workshops on specific issues, accompanied by on-site inspections of the problem, ought to be the major public involvement technique used as they promote better understanding of the variety of alternatives and trade-offs that go into a decision. The workshop and on-site inspection offer the Forest Service a chance to show the public what the problem looks like (Gale, 1973).

The process must include ample time for the public to understand the alternatives and to have the implications "sink in." The Forest Service should involve various interests earlier in the process rather than announcing the draft plan and holding an open public meeting with 6 weeks for input, as is now the practice. Good public involvement will not be a brief process. Rather, "it calls for patience, understanding, and extraordinary sensitivity." (Bolle, 504).

Public involvement should continue after decisions are made. People's interests do not end suddenly after decisions are made. The workshop approach is a good way to bring them in on the problems of enacting the new decision. Such techniques can often be used to the Agency's advantage. Tours and seminars on the problems of Oak Creek, or Sycamore Wilderness, would provide an advance support sector for Forest Service decisions which are sure to be unpopular among some groups, though environmentally essential. With imaginative selection of participants, these events might also reduce the public's sense of inefficacy which produces the false "apathy" that greets many Agency public involvement efforts: People do have views, but they do not feel their expression of those ideas will have any impact (O'Riordan, 1971).

The Forest Service should learn as much as possible from each event. The techniques of the Multiple Use Guide Review left the Coconino with an unexpected dividend. Holmes (1974) noted that "It was interesting to see specific areas of general concern daylighted by the number of comments submitted from all segments of interests of committee members," and he was able to list general evaluations the public had made on wilderness management, off-road vehicle use, marginal grazing operations, law enforcement, wildlife, fire prevention, and water production. His report implies the existence of public support for some "very hard decisions" the Coconino will have to face in the future.

The Forest Service must not agonize over what role the "silent majority" is to play in influencing National Forest decisions. At the National Forest level, the most concerned interests will usually be specifically, and often commercially, involved, so a National Forest has no alternative but to concern itself with the "local context." The relevant "silent majority" is therefore, at most, the local, or at least, the proximal population, and the Agency should gradually involve some of these elements of the public. However, there is little point in worrying who they are or why they do not show up for hearings on specific issues.

There is also the problem of protecting the "National" interests in the face of a process that emphasizes local viewpoints. Hendee (1974) indicated, for example, that the Roadless Area Review showed "the prevalence of local input which resulted from current public-involvement procedures" and suggested that this local emphasis "could sacrifice legitimate national interests to more limited, local views." Unfortunately, each National Forest does not have time to muse about the "national interest." Our society has seen a development of such a variety of groups to represent both extractive and preservationist values as well as all the other gradients of opinion, that we ought to be able to rely on the dialogue among those groups to sort out the appropriate policy mix for each issue and each locality. If the "National interest" is

not being given its due, a change in Americans patterns of consumption and recreation would be required to insure consideration of it. Each National Forest may have an important role to play in that process, but it can only play that role by immersing itself in its local human surroundings, recognizing that the collectivity of local publics is a "constituency", and developing, through such actions, a position from which public support can be gleaned and Agency influence exerted.

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